

Quarterly Forum

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A British Scale for Measuring White Attitudes to Coloured People

Considering the social importance of race relations and the research interest the subject has generated in recent years, relatively little attention has been devoted to the development of a technically adequate and generally applicable measure of white attitudes towards coloured people in Britain. Much work has been content with minimally standardized measures constructed *ad hoc* for the purposes of a particular study (Hill 1967, Kawwa 1965, 1968). The scale of Warr et al. (1967) though technically sophisticated is not a measure of attitude to coloured people as such but of the more general disposition, ethnocentrism. The length and complexity of its items are also an obstacle to its use in survey research, or with young or dull subjects. Stacey (1970) has shown that it has a low level of acceptability in the population at large. The scale used by Abrams in the Survey of Race Relations study (Rose et al. 1969) has been criticized (Lawrence 1969, Rowan 1969, Bagley 1970a) for its arbitrary item selection and weighting and item difficulty. There is also a complete lack of reliability or other technical information about it. The six item version derived by Bagley (1970b) from Abrams's data is a distinct improvement, but its reliability is only .67 (coefficient alpha), its item scoring is dichotomous with one item open-ended and it is not suitable for administration as a self-completion questionnaire.

The new scale, the H-scale, was developed initially for use with adolescents in a study linking attitudes and mass media usage (Hartmann and Husband 1971). It has also proved suitable for adults and seems to be a useful instrument of general applicability. Its main psychometric characteristics are described below.

CONSTRUCTION

The objective was to produce a short, balanced scale, to measure favourability of attitude to coloured people, containing items relevant to the British situation, likely to be meaningful even to 11-year-olds. Following Fishbein (1965, 1967) and Edwards (1957) the conception of attitude adopted was an affective one, attitude being defined as 'the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object' (Thurstone, 1946). To this end, following a perusal of the literature and pilot interviews with secondary school-children, the seventeen items shown in Table 1 were prepared. These include adaptations of some of the more discriminating items used by Kawwa (1965) as well as items specially constructed for the purpose. The phrase 'coloured people' or 'coloured immigrants'

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was used because pilot work showed that it was generally understandable, while many subjects did not distinguish clearly between different coloured groups. These seventeen items were administered to 104 white secondary school-children, both boys and girls, aged between 11 and 15, in the form of a four-point Likert Scale with response categories 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Disagree', and 'Strongly Disagree'. These were scored 1, 2, 3, or 4 according to the direction of wording of the item so that high scores represented the most negative or hostile responses. Total scores were obtained by summing all seventeen items. The thirty highest scorers and thirty lowest scorers were separated out and the distributions of

Table 1
Phi Coefficients and First Factor Loadings of Items Used in the Construction of the H Scale

<i>Items Comprising the H Scale</i>	<i>Phi</i>	<i>1st Principal Component</i>
1. Everyone in this country should be treated equally regardless of their colour.	·904	·755
2. It is reasonable for people not to want to have coloured people as neighbours.*	·703	·690
3. Coloured people are naturally just as intelligent as white people.	·748	·703
4. Coloured people are more often trouble-makers than white people.	·709	·697
5. Coloured people in Britain should be encouraged to mix with white people as much as possible.	·900	·783
6. Coloured people should not be put in positions of authority over white people.	·507	·562
7. Coloured immigrants should be able to get council houses in the same way as English people do.	·935	·799
8. This country would be better off if there were no coloured immigrants living here.	·868	·761
9. Coloured immigrants should only be given jobs that the English don't want.	·866	·760
10. Coloured people should be allowed to come and settle in Britain.	·801	·746
<i>Items Rejected</i>		
11. Coloured people have as much right to be considered British as anyone else in this country.	·900	·768
12. Coloured people in Britain are making a very valuable contribution to this country.	·628	·627
13. We in Britain can learn a lot from the customs and ways of life of coloured immigrants.	·538	·521
14. It is not a good idea for white people to mix with coloured people too much.	·514	·636
15. Coloured people are superior to white people in many ways.	·384	·371
16. White people are naturally superior to coloured people in most ways.	·315	·283
17. Coloured people in this country should be more willing to adopt the British way of life.	·300	·134

* *Alternative wording*: It is reasonable for people to object to having coloured people as neighbours.

responses for each item for these two criterion groups were compared. Following Edwards (1957), phi coefficients were calculated after dichotomizing response categories, as an index of the discriminating power of each item. Additionally, using the responses of all subjects, item intercorrelations were factor analysed. This yielded a first principal component loading on all items and accounting for 42·36 per cent of the variance. A second component accounted for only 9·58 per cent of the variance and a third for 7·50 per cent. The close correspondence between the phi coefficients and first factor loadings can be seen from Table 1, both indices providing equivalent bases for item selection. For the final scale

the ten items loading most highly on the first component were selected, with the exception that item 11 was rejected in favour of item 6, both to balance the scale for direction of scoring and range of content and because item 11 is a virtual repetition of item 1. The scale as used consists of the first ten items in Table 1, in that order.

The scale was administered during interviews with 207 white secondary school-children in urban areas of relatively high immigrant settlement (in the West Midlands and West Yorkshire) and 208 children in areas of relatively low immigrant settlement (Glasgow, Teesside, Sheffield, and Southampton). These groups are referred to as the 'high' and 'low' samples, respectively; together they are referred to as the 'main sample'.

The percentage of immigrant children in secondary schools in the boroughs used in the 'high' sample ranged from 5.2 per cent for West Bromwich to 9.5 per cent for Warley; the percentages in the boroughs in the 'low' sample were all under 2.2 per cent. (These are Department of Education and Science figures for January 1969 given by the Institute of Race Relations, 1970. Though the Department's definition of 'immigrant' is a technical one and is not identical either with 'foreign-born' or 'coloured', the figures may nevertheless be taken in this case as accurately indicating differing levels of coloured population in different parts of the country.)

Within each type of area schools were chosen in pairs so that one contained an appreciable number of coloured children (between 10.4 per cent and 41.6 per cent) and the other few or none (0-3.8 per cent). Equal numbers of children were randomly selected from class lists in each type of school so that the main sample consisted of 104 children from 'high' areas with high opportunity for contact with coloured children at school (high-highs), 103 from 'high' areas with relatively little opportunity for contact with coloureds at school (high-lows); 104 low-highs, and 104 low-lows. The proportion of coloured children in a school was closely associated with the level of concentration of coloured people in the local neighbourhood whether the coloured population of the borough as a whole was a high or low. A further 148 children from small towns in mining areas of South Yorkshire and County Durham, where immigrant settlement has been virtually nil, also completed the scale. This is referred to as the 'No' sample. The sample therefore consisted of 563 children, roughly evenly divided between boys and girls, and between 11/12 year olds and 14/15 year olds; 207 were from 'high' areas, 208 from 'low' areas and 148 from 'no' areas.

The scale was also given to 302 parents (150 fathers and 152 mothers) of the 415 children in the main sample. Only one parent of any one child was interviewed, and choice of father or mother was random and unrelated to sex of the child. In the children's survey, item 2 was found to be confusing for some subjects, and the reworded version (see footnote to Table 1) was used for the adult sample. This seems to be a preferable wording. Both the adolescent and adult samples were predominantly working class. The distribution of the adults by occupational status was as follows: upper middle class 0.3 per cent, middle class 2 per cent, lower middle class 11 per cent, skilled working class 44 per cent, semi- and unskilled 38 per cent, lowest level of subsistence 4 per cent, unknown 0.3 per cent.

Reliability

Split-half reliabilities based on the positively and negatively worded items, and on odd and even items were calculated. Odd items, for purposes of this calculation, were Nos. 3, 4, 7, 8, 9. Using the Spearman-Brown formula this gave coefficients of .79 (positive/negative) and .82 (odd/even) for the children, and .86 (positive/negative) and .85 (odd/even) for the adults.

Factor Structure

A principle components analysis of inter-item correlations was carried out on the

data for all children combined, adults combined, 'high', 'low', and 'no' sample children, separately, and 'high' and 'low' adults separately.

In no case did more than three latent roots exceed unity and in most cases only one. In all cases the variance was accounted for predominantly by a single general factor that far outweighed subsequent factors in importance. This provides further evidence of the homogeneity of the scale. Table 2 shows the loadings on the first three factors for all children and all adults. Factor loadings for the sub-samples were very similar and may be obtained from the authors on request, together with correlation matrices, item means and standard deviations.

Table 2
Loadings on First Three Principal Components (Unrotated)

Item No.	All Children			All Adults		
	I	II	III	I	II	III
1	.68	.27	-.01	.63	.16	-.48
2	.45	-.56	-.57	.57	.03	-.46
3	.40	.59	-.45	.32	-.88	-.26
4	.55	-.36	.34	.60	-.25	.55
5	.70	.15	.02	.74	.15	.01
6	.55	-.23	-.01	.66	-.03	.04
7	.71	.10	.20	.75	.16	-.05
8	.70	-.16	-.14	.80	.12	.18
9	.71	.07	.39	.66	-.14	.17
10	.75	.06	-.10	.79	.13	.09
Latent Root	3.99	0.99	0.87	4.43	0.97	0.89
Variance (%)	39.9	9.9	8.7	44.3	9.7	8.9

We feel justified in concluding, therefore, that the scale as a whole provides a good estimate of a generalized attitude to coloured people in Britain, which is essentially similar in adolescents and adults, and between areas of the country with differing levels of coloured immigrant settlement.

Table 3
Adolescents' Mean H-Scores by Area and Proportion of Coloured Children in School

		Proportion Coloured Children in School		
		High	Low	
High Area	Mean	(a) 23.60	(b) 21.78	High Area Total 22.69
	s	6.066	5.742	5.976
	N	104	103	207
Low Area	Mean	(c) 20.50	(d) 18.67	Low Area Total 19.59
	s	5.979	5.700	5.912
	N	104	104	208
		'High' Schools Total	'Low' Schools Total	Main Sample Total
Mean		22.05	20.22	21.14
s		6.219	5.929	6.144
N		208	207	415
		No Area		
		Mean 19.25		
		s 5.799		
		N 148		

Significance of differences
(2 tailed t-tests)

	P		P
High vs Low Area	< .001	'High' vs 'Low' schools	< .001
High vs No Area	< .001	(a) vs (b)	< .05
Low vs No Area	N.S.	(c) vs (d)	< .05
(a) vs (c)	< .001	(b) vs (c)	N.S.
(b) vs (d)	< .001		

RELATIONSHIP WITH AREA, AGE, SEX, AND ABILITY

Table 3 shows the mean scores of the adolescent sample broken down by area and proportion of coloured children in the school. It is clear that a higher proportion of coloured people on both of these factors is associated with more negative attitudes, and that the area factor is a stronger determinant of attitude than the presence of coloured children in the immediate school environment.

This pattern of scores suggests that area-wide norms are generated in areas of high immigrant settlement that operate irrespective of day-to-day opportunity for contact with coloureds at school. Table 4 shows that the difference between high and low areas is also present in the parents, and that they also score higher on average than their children.

Table 4
Adults' H-Score by Area

	High Area	Low Area	Total
Mean	24.51	21.75	23.09
s	6.827	6.925	7.014
N	147	155	302

Significance of difference: $t = 3.49$, $P < .001$

Adolescents' scores by age and sex are shown in Tables 5 (a) and 5 (b); adults' scores by sex are shown in Table 5 (c). There tends to be a reduction of about 2 points in H-score between age 11/12 and age 14/15 though this fails to reach significance in the low area. There is no difference between boys and girls, except in the 'no' area. This sex difference in the 'no' area cannot be explained except

Table 5 (a)
Adolescents' H-Score by Age

		11/12 Years	14/15 Years	Total	t	P
High Area	Mean	23.81	21.57	22.69	2.72	< .01
	s	6.092	5.639	5.976		
	N	104	103	207		
Low Area	Mean	20.28	18.89	19.59	1.69	N.S.
	s	6.312	5.396	5.912		
	N	104	104	208		
'No' Area	Mean	20.38	18.00	19.25	2.53	< .05
	s	5.605	5.755	5.799		
	N	78	70	148		
Total	Mean	21.59	19.66	20.64	3.78	< .001
	s	6.274	5.779	6.112		
	N	286	277	563		

Table 5 (b)
Adolescents' H-Score by Sex

		Boys	Girls	Total	t	P
High Area	Mean	22.29	23.23	22.69	1.13	N.S.
	s	6.127	5.725	5.976		
	N	118	89	207		
Low Area	Mean	19.18	20.00	19.59	1.00	N.S.
	s	6.181	5.595	5.912		
	N	105	103	208		
'No' Area	Mean	20.15	18.28	19.25	1.97	< .05
	s	6.232	5.116	5.799		
	N	77	71	148		
Total	Mean	20.65	20.63	20.64	0.04	N.S.
	s	6.323	5.861	6.112		
	N	300	263	563		

by *post hoc* hypotheses based on specific features of the 'no' areas. No sex difference appears for the parents.

Table 5 (c)
Adults H-Scores by Sex

	Men	Women	Total
Mean	23.08	23.10	23.09
<i>s</i>	7.031	6.998	7.014
<i>N</i>	150	152	302

Significance of difference: $t = 0.026$, N.S.

All children in the main sample were rated as above average, average, or below average on school performance by their teachers in a forced distribution of roughly 25:50:25. For those for whom I.Q. scores were also available the mean I.Q.s for the three grades were 104.0, 94.8, and 83.5 respectively. Table 6 shows that H-score is not significantly related to ability.

Table 6
Adolescents' H-Score by Ability

	Above Average for Year	Average for Year	Below Average for Year
Mean	20.31	21.34	21.71
<i>s</i>	5.536	6.289	6.278
<i>N</i>	105	197	111

$F = 1.561$ ($df = 2/410$) N.S.

VALIDITY INDICATIONS

As part of the interview, children were asked to indicate how they felt about coloured people by making a mark on a graphic rating scale divided into thirteen intervals. The scale was labelled 'I like them very much' and 'I dislike them very much' at the extremes, with 'I like them a little', 'I neither like nor dislike them' and 'I dislike them a little' at intermediate points. They were also asked to indicate on identical scales how they thought 'most of the people in your class at school', 'your mother', 'your father', and 'most of the people who live near you' felt about coloured people. These scales were scored from 1 to 13 according to where they were marked. Table 8 shows the degree of correlation between the ratings and the H-scale.

Table 7
*Correlation of Adolescents' H-Score with Ratings of Own Attitude, and Friends,'
Father's Mother's, and Neighbours' Attitudes, and Parent's H-Score*

Rating of Own attitude	.554***
Rating of Peers' attitude	.284***
Rating of Mother's attitude	.400***
Rating of Father's attitude	.387***
Rating of Neighbours' attitude	.251***
Parent's H Score	.174**

*** Significant at .001 level

** Significant at .01 level

The correlation of .554 with personal liking for coloured people indicates that the H-scale is measuring to an important degree favourability or unfavourability of affect towards coloured people.

Both adolescents and adults were asked 'Do you think anything should be done about coloured immigration to Britain?' Their answers were recorded and subsequently classified according to the type of action recommended as shown in Table 8. The 'Positive measures' category included such statements as, 'Provide

Table 8
H-Scores by Replies to 'Do you think anything should be done about coloured immigration to Britain?'

	Nothing or no answer	Limit entry	Stop entry	Send them back	Positive measures	Other answers	Total	F (excluding 'Other answers')	P
Adolescents	Mean s N	18.10 5.298 128	23.79 6.038 109	26.60 5.156 63	16.03 3.632 31	17.73 4.950 33	20.64 6.112 563	42.88	< .001
Adults	Mean s N	17.97 6.553 30	25.58 6.021 98	29.79 5.615 41	14.67 4.110 3	23.21 4.958 16	23.09 7.014 302	31.16	< .001

Table 9
Adults' H-Score by Attitude to Working with Coloureds

	Response Categories					All responses	F (excluding 'Don't know')	P
	Very Happy	Quite Happy	No feelings	Quite Unhappy	Very Unhappy	Don't know		
High Area	Mean SD N	13.89 4.194 4	19.95 4.238 22	24.59 5.892 50	28.66 5.750 15	32.76 6.007 11	24.62 6.890 112	< .001
Low Area	Mean SD N	15.83 2.291 4	18.02 6.481 33	21.49 5.552 56	28.17 6.572 8	31.51 3.313 7	21.50 6.891 115	< .001
Total	Mean SD N	14.86 3.517 8	18.79 5.768 55	22.95 5.921 106	28.49 6.053 23	32.28 5.167 18	23.04 7.065 227	< .001

them with better housing', and 'Stop discrimination against them'. The 'Other Answers' were very varied and largely irrelevant to the question. It is clear that there is a strong and direct relationship between views about immigration policy and H-score. A similar clear and direct relationship between the H-score of adults in employment and their answers to the multiple choice question 'How do you (would you) feel about working with coloured people?' is shown in Table 9.

Adolescents were asked 'Are there any coloured boys or girls that you would say are good friends of yours?' and adults, 'Are there any coloured people that you would say are your friends?' H-scores in relation to their answers are

Table 10
Adolescents' H-Score by Friendship

		<i>Having Coloured Friends</i>	<i>No Coloured Friends</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i> (one-tailed)
High area/ 'high' school	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	22.18 5.579 63	25.78 6.135 41	23.60 6.066 104	3.065	< .01
High area/ 'low' school	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	20.42 6.135 36	22.52 5.378 67	21.78 5.742 103	1.782	< .05
High area total	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	21.54 5.849 99	23.76 5.894 108	22.69 5.976 207	2.707	< .01
Low area/ 'high' school	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	19.30 5.250 71	23.09 6.598 33	20.50 5.979 104	3.123	< .01
Low area/ 'low' school	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	18.78 5.111 41	18.60 6.052 63	18.67 5.700 104	0.153	N.S.
Low area total	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	19.11 5.205 112	20.15 6.599 96	19.59 5.912 208	1.263	N.S.
'No' area	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	17.13 4.400 16	19.51 5.894 132	19.25 5.799 148	1.556	N.S.
Total	Mean <i>s</i> <i>N</i>	20.026 5.626 227	21.06 6.385 336	20.64 6.112 563	1.968	< .05

shown in Tables 10 and 11. The non-significance differences for the adolescents in the 'no' area and the 'low contact' school situation in the low area would seem to be accounted for by the extremely limited opportunity for contact with coloureds in these situations and a consequent different interpretation of the question about friendship. It was apparent in the interviews that respondents in these situations were claiming friendship on the basis of the most casual acquaintance, whereas in the 'high' areas and schools where contact with coloureds was common, children did distinguish between friendship and mere acquaintance. We interpret these findings as indicating that H-score is predictive of friendly personal relationships in circumstances where such relationships are a realistic possibility.

It is important to see the relationship between H-score and friendship in relation to the factors of area and school. In the present British situation, the presence of a relatively large coloured population at borough or conurbation level is

Table 11
Adults' H-Score by Friendship

		Having Coloured Friends	No Coloured Friends	Total	t	P
High Area	Mean	20.39	26.33	24.51	5.27	< .001
	s	6.030	6.352	6.827		
	N	45	102	147		
Low Area	Mean	18.03	23.04	21.75	4.13	< .001
	s	6.018	6.749	6.925		
	N	40	115	155		
Total	Mean	19.28	24.59	23.09	6.27	< .001
	s	6.139	6.767	7.014		
	N	85	217	302		

associated with more negative attitudes in both adolescents and adults. For adolescents the presence of coloureds in the school and neighbourhood is also associated with more negative attitudes. On the other hand, actual friendly relationships are associated with *less* negative attitudes. The factors that make for acceptance rather than hostility under conditions of contact require further investigation.

A further point that emerges from the data presented is that the H-scale is more predictive of other attitudes and behaviour among adults than among adolescents.

CONCLUSION

The H-scale appears to have the characteristics required of a general purpose measure of white attitudes to coloured people in Britain. Its reliability is acceptable, and validity indications are encouraging. So far it has only been applied to working-class groups. Further research is required to establish its usefulness on middle-class samples, and also to explore further its relationship with other variables.

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